

VA PARTNERS WITH VETS GROUPS TO REDUCE CLAIMS BACKLOG

In partnership with the American Legion and Disabled American Veterans, VA will ramp up its Fully Developed Claims output in an effort to cut down on the backlog.

Fully Developed Claims - claims with all the necessary evidence that can be processed in half the time of normal claims, with better accuracy – are a key part of the solution. A great deal of time spent on a claim is simply waiting for evidence to be submitted and collected. Fully Developed Claims strip away that antiquated method in order to reach claims decisions much faster.

The American Legion and DAV members are a sounding board for issues affecting Veterans. The two-way communication also helps to amplify initiatives to Veteran Service Organizations.

This partnership is just one of the many ways VA is tackling the issue. In recent weeks, mandatory overtime has gone into effect for 10,000 claims raters in the agency through the fiscal year, along with a decision to assign provisional ratings to claims older than a year to get Veterans their benefits more quickly.

American Legion Commander, James E Koutz says, "We have been working with the VA since last December on its fully developed claims process. Teams of our experts have already gone to VA Regional Offices in Denver, Pittsburgh, Baltimore and other cities to help identify best practices for Fully Developed Claims and to further train our own service officers. "



Congratulations to Catawba County NCDVA Scholarship Award Winners

The following students from Catawba County are recipients of the North Carolina Division of Veterans Affairs Scholarship:

- Dillon N Johnson (CVCC)
- Katie G Hartley (CVCC)
- Brandi Jo Pursel (Western Carolina)
- Ashley M Peltack (UNC Asheville)
- Tayler M Green (UNC Charlotte)
- Hannah M Roberts (CVCC)

This scholarship covers free tuition for 8 semesters. Congratulations!!!

JUNE 2013

VA BURIAL BENEFITS: WHAT ARE YOU ENTITLED TO?

There are many misconceptions regarding VA burial and death benefits and what a Veteran is entitled to.

Veterans who have received an Honorable Discharge may receive a military funeral along with a United States Flag. The funeral home in which you choose, will contact the appropriate installation for the military funeral.

A Veteran honorably discharge is also entitled to a foot marker or a medallion. The foot markers come in bronze, granite or marble. Those choosing not to have a foot marker can receive a medallion instead, which come in three sizes.

VA burial benefits are only paid when a veteran has been receiving Service Connected or Non Service Connected benefits. If a Veteran died of a Service Connected death, then the VA will pay up to \$2000 reimbursement on the burial. If they are receiving Non Service Connected benefits then the VA will reimburse up to \$700.

Veterans are also entitled to be buried in a VA or State cemetery. The funeral home you choose can help to set up transportation and services through the cemeteries.

Markers, medallions and burial benefits can be applied for through your local VA office.





D-Day June 6, 1944

June 6, 1944, 160,000 Allied troops landed along a 50-mile stretch of heavily-fortified French coastline to fight Nazi Germany on the beaches of Normandy, France. General Dwight D. Eisenhower called the operation a crusade in which “we will accept nothing less than full victory,” More than 5,000 ships and 13,000 aircraft supported the D-Day invasion, and by day’s end on June 6, the Allies gained a foot hold in Normandy. The D-Day cost was high—more than 9,000 Allied Soldiers were killed or wounded—but more than 100,000 Soldiers began the march across Europe to defeat Hitler. June 5, 1944 was selected as the date of the invasion, but due to bad weather it was delayed by 24 hours.

During World War II (1943-1945), the Battle of Normandy, which lasted from June 1944 to August of 1944, resulted in the Allied liberation of Western Europe from Nazi Germany’s control. Codenamed Operation Overlord, the battle begun June 6, 1944. The invasion was one of the largest amphibious military assaults in history. Prior to D-Day, the Allies conducted a large scale deception campaign designed to mislead the Germans about the intended invasion target. By late August 1944, all of northern France had been liberated, and by the following spring the Allies had defeated the Germans. The Normandy landings have been called the beginning of the end of war in Europe.

Reminders

- **June 16:**
Father’s Day
- **June 26: Flag Day**
- **July 4:**
Independence Day
- **August 4: US Coast Guard Day**
- **August 15: Soliders Reunion Day: Parade & All Day Event**